754 of magical forces in sorcery. The umoshi is a man who kills without rhyme or reason, an enemy of society who kills from a distance, who is associated with black birds and who steals parts of the body from newly dug graves.(1) Enemies may also be killed by the use of medicine, either apparently by an evilly disposed person or by the *Ng'anga* who may be employed to defend someone who believes he is attacked.(2)

831 372 *Sex and Fire.* Characteristic of this group of peoples is the series of beliefs associated with the magic potency of sex when used according to certain rules, and, connected with this, the danger of the pollution of domestic fires or the fires of chiefs by contact with adulterers or evil livers. Such beliefs are the basis of the multiplication of small protective rites associated with chieftainship, the bringing-up of children, and the girls' initiation ceremony.(3)

SOME IMPORTANT RITUALS

788 241 The most important ceremonies carried out amongst the Bemba are as follows:-

(1) *Economic Rites.* At the time of the firing of the bush the chief or headmen places an axe at the head of his bed at night or, in the case of a chief, in the relic shrine. Sowing ceremonies at the Paramount's capital used to be elaborate, but are now reduced to the placing of seeds in the relic shrines; similar ceremonies are done by headmen. The first-fruits rites, when the tasting of the new crops takes place, were also formerly elaborate among the Bemba. They are still carried out in an abbreviated form at the capital, and headmen place in their small spirit huts portions of each new crop.

● 76 782 (2) *Ceremonial in Chieftainship.* The most elaborate forms of ceremonial amongst the Bemba are those that surround the burial of a dead chief, the installation of his successor and the moving of his village. In the old days the death of a Paramount Chief was concealed for a few days while his followers fled from the capital and the sacred relics were moved to a place of safety. The ritual buriers then took charge and dried the body and covered it with a sauce made of beans, carefully preserving the toe and finger nails. After a year the corpse was carried round the Paramount's territory and human victims were sacrificed on each spot where the body rested at night. The body was then carried across the Chambezi river where it was received by the *shimwalule* who carried it into the sacred grove. The favourite wives of the chief and some of his slaves were put into the grave to hold the body of the *Citimukulu* and were stifled as the earth was filled in. Although cattle are not kept in the area, the body was wrapped in the skin of an ox.

643 The installation of a chief is a similarly complex process, in which all the *bakabilo* and *befingo* play their part. Important elements were the transfer of the sacred relics to the new capital, the lighting of the chief's new fire, and the installation of his head wife. Details of this form of ceremonial are not available from the associated tribes, but it is certain that

(1) For some comments on the relation between witchcraft and psychopathology, see Davidson, 1940.
(2) Richards, I, 1935. (3) Richards, 7, 1940.

introducer of *Butwa* throughout these parts, and his name is famous in many a *Butwa* song."(1) Membership was open to all, irrespective of age and sex. The Ant-hill clan was particularly closely associated with the society. Refusal to join on the part of either of the spouses was a valid cause of divorce. A higher grade of elders (*nangula*) in the society was constituted by members of both sexes who wore a special dress, bore special names and claimed to possess supernatural powers. Sessions were held annually or at longer intervals. The candidates, who had to pay an initiation fee, were given the *chibolo* concoction to drink and were paraded under an arch of bent saplings before entering the temple where sexual intercourse took place. Later they were given fetish horns by the elders of the society. Painted in stripes and smeared with white chalk they participated in the all-night dancing (imitative of the movements of the crested crane), the beer-drinking, and the festivities which followed. A good deal of sexual licence was allowed within the precincts of the temple. Members were bound to assist one another in sickness and need and were forbidden, under penalty of death, to divulge the society's secrets. *Butwa* performed fertility rites; it wielded considerable political power, so that the chiefs had to treat it with respect. It was feared by outsiders who charged it with terrorism and robbery. Special funerary ceremonies were performed at the death of members. Members of *Butwa* used an esoteric language, *Bubende*; this was an argot formed by transposing syllables, changing initial letters and introducing obsolete words and compound metaphorical expressions. *Butwa* songs were sung by women members to the accompaniment of *chanza*, a musical instrument resembling the guitar. Apparently still flourishing in the first decade of the twentieth century, the society is said to have since died away.(2)

575 [586] [786] [302 535] [784] [766] [198] [525 534]

Blood-Brotherhood

Blood-brotherhood pacts were contracted between the natives and the Arab traders.(3) A marriage with a native girl, presumably a maternal relative of the blood-brother, was a usual concomitant of the ceremony.

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Guilds

Occupational guilds were known in the Chishinga(4) and Aushi country where iron-ore smelting and iron-working were hereditary crafts surrounded by a wealth of ritual. It is likely that they also functioned in the Luapula valley while the industry was alive, though no mention of this occurs in the available sources.

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POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

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The Kazembe was formerly an absolute overlord, subordinate in name only to Mwata Yamvo to whom he continued to send annual tribute.(5) Lukwesa Mpanga did not send any for three years. When several of his subjects were killed or savaged by wild animals this was interpreted as a punishment for his neglect. He made amends by sending a convoy with slaves, salt and copper.(6)

(1) Campbell, op.cit.
(2) Brelsford, J. 1946, p.14.
(3) Livingstone, II, p.258.
(4) Brelsford, J. 1940.
(5) Velten, II, p.174.
(6) Poggo, 1880.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

food, and to protect his person and that of the sacred relics from the contagion of illness, death, or sex defilement.[1]

The ritual by which a successor to the chieftainship is converted from an ordinary individual to a ruler with almost divine powers, has a good deal of political importance. It confers authority on the priests—in this case hereditary officials (*bakabilo*) who carry it out—and gives them, as we shall see, considerable power to check the chief himself. The complete ritual by which the *umupashi* of a dead ruler is liberated to guard the land he governed, and the new heir is installed, is too complex to describe here and now. Briefly speaking, it consists of the desiccation of the body during a period of a year, from one kafir-corn harvest to the next; its burial in a special grove (with human sacrifices in the old days); and the building of a shrine on the site of the deserted capital. To make the new chief, *bakabilo* must preside at the installation of a new great wife, arrange for the sexual purification of the royal pair, and the lighting of their new sacred fire.[2] They must hand over to the heir the heirlooms (*babenye*) of which they have been in charge during the interregnum, and must finally found a new village and build again the sacred huts in which the relics are to be kept. Such a ceremonial may take eighteen months to two years and the participation of all the *bakabilo* and hereditary buriers (*bafingo*) in the case of the paramount; a lesser time and very many fewer priestly dignitaries in the case of the territorial chiefs. The secrecy and awe surrounding these ceremonies is, I believe, one of the ways by which the people's reverence for their chiefs is maintained.

(*b*) *Legal Rules of Descent and Succession.* Against this background of beliefs as to the continuity between one generation and another, the nature of descent and succession is defined exactly by legal rule. Descent in the royal family is reckoned to the time of first occupation of the country, and twenty-five to thirty Citimukulus are remembered. In the case of a territorial chief, the line of ancestors is not so long, and most are described as having been 'born in the country'. Most of the names honoured are those of men but some are those of women, and it seems that

[1] cf. my *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia* (1939), chap. xvii.

[2] Hence the importance of the great wife of the chief (*umukolo wa calo*) in the political life of the tribe and the belief that her behaviour also influences the welfare of the land.